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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 62
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 16 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to our letter dated 9 February 1999, I have the honour to draw your attention to new violations of the flight information region of Nicosia and of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force, recorded on 11 February 1999.

On that day, at 10.50 hours, two RF-4 military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force entered the Nicosia flight information region from a northerly direction violating international air traffic regulations and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus. The two aircraft flew over the areas of Kormakitis, Karpasia and Famagusta before exiting the Nicosia flight information region at 11.40 hours and re-entering the Ankara flight information region.

As stated in my previous letters, the systematic Turkish unauthorized intrusions into the Nicosia flight information region and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus are in violation of international air traffic rules and, at the same time, they are in contravention of the provisions of the Security Council resolutions on Cyprus.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to strongly protest this new provocative act by Turkey which is a further reminder of Turkey's blatant disregard of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and all the relevant decisions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus.

I would like to underline, once again, that the present violation occurred following the adoption of Security Council resolutions 1217 (1998) and 1218 (1998), in which the Council called upon all States to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus

and to refrain from any action that might prejudice that sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. It is yet another example of Turkey's unwillingness to comply with the provisions of these resolutions.

Such provocative actions are not conducive to reducing tension and run counter to the initiative of the Secretary-General announced on 30 September 1998, within the framework of his mission of good offices, with the goal of reducing tensions and promoting progress towards a just and lasting settlement in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/53/833

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 1999

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Fifty-third session
Fifth Committee
Agenda item 117
Pattern of conferences

Impact of economy measures on the delivery of mandated conference services

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Background

1. In paragraph 34 of resolution 53/208 B of 18 December 1998, on pattern of conferences, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the impact of economy measures on the delivery of mandated conference services to the Assembly at its fifty-third session.

2. In paragraph 33 of the same resolution, the General Assembly took note of paragraph 62 of the report of the Committee on Conferences to the Assembly at its fifty-third session (A/53/52). That paragraph recorded that, during the discussion by the Committee at its 1998 substantive session of an item on improved coordination of conference services, it was stated, on the basis of information provided by Secretariat representatives during informal consultations, that no further budget reductions could be borne by conference services at the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

3. For its part, in its first report on the activities of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly (A/53/7), circulated under agenda items 112 (Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations) and 116 (Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency) of the Assembly's fifty-third session, the Advisory Committee touched on the question of resource reductions for conference services at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna.

II. Fluctuation in resource requirements for conference services

4. As shown in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999 (A/52/6/Rev.1, table 27E.1), expenditures from the regular budget for conference services at Headquarters, and the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna for the biennium 1994–1995 totalled $465,373,600. Appropriations for the biennium 1996–1997 amounted to $459,263,200, reflecting a decline of $6,110,400 or 1.3 per cent as compared to earlier expenditures. Resource requirements for the biennium 1998–1999 were estimated, before recosting, at $431,499,100. The reduction of $27,764,100 in the level of resources proposed for the current biennium, as compared to the revised appropriations for the biennium 1996–1997, reflects, in part, the introduction of net budgeting for conference services provided in Vienna to the United

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Nations Industrial Development Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency ($11,213,900) and the transfer of two organizational units out of conference services in New York ($2,496,800). Therefore, the net decrease in appropriated resources for conferences services was $14,053,400 or 3.25 per cent.

5. As regards established staff resources, in the biennium 1994–1995, the staffing tables of conference services at the three duty stations included, in all, 2,192 posts financed from the regular budget (1,017 in the Professional category and above and 1,175 in the General Service and Trades and Crafts categories). In the biennium 1996–1997, the total figure changed to 2,178 posts (the number of posts in the Professional category and above increased to 1,022), while General Service and Trades and Crafts posts declined to 1,156). In the biennium 1998–1999, the total number of posts dropped to 1,793 (880 in the Professional category and above and 913 in the General Service and Trades and Crafts categories). However, this reduction of 385 regular budget posts reflects the transfer of 169 posts in Vienna (77 Professional category and above and 92 General Service and related categories) from the United Nations staffing table, and the redeployment of 13 posts (10 Professional category and above and 3 General Service and related categories), with their functions, out of conference services in New York. The actual decrease in available posts was 203 (55 Professional category and above and 148 General Service and Trades and Crafts categories).

III. Fluctuation in conference-servicing workloads

6. In the biennium 1994–1995, a total of 28,588 meetings were held at the three conference centres (including calendar and non-calendar meetings). In the biennium 1996–1997, the figure rose to 29,092 meetings. The estimate for the biennium 1998–1999 is 28,001 meetings. Translation workloads went from 340,455,000 words in the biennium 1994–1995 to 297,176,000 in 1996–1997 and are estimated at 300,456,000 for the biennium 1998–1999. The output of the printing and reproduction services in New York, Geneva and Vienna was 2,436,441 page impressions in the biennium 1994–1995, 1,787,855 in 1996–1997 and is estimated at 1,717,616 for the current biennium.

IV. Impact of resource reductions

7. In compliance with requests contained in General Assembly resolutions 50/214, of 23 December 1995, and 51/221 B, of 18 December 1996, the Secretary-General submitted two reports (A/C.5/50/57 and Add.1 and A/C.5/51/53), which described the impact of resource reductions and savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities at that time. The latter report indicated, in paragraph 55, that, as far as conference services were concerned, while there had been no serious disruptions of the work of intergovernmental bodies, services for night meetings had been limited for the most part to meetings of the Security Council, the Fifth Committee and the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The acquisition of computers to provide all translators with workstations had to be delayed, as had the issuance of meeting records in all languages. It also pointed out, in paragraph 11 (e), that delays in the preparation and submission of documents and publications had resulted in delays in editing, translation and reproduction.

8. Only in the availability of services for unscheduled meetings, mainly those of regional and other major groupings of Member States, did the 1996–1997 constraints affect the overall capacity to meet demand. Although a lower demand for such meetings kept the number of requests for services that could not be granted at levels similar to those of previous years, there were many more cases where services could be made available only on dates different from those preferred by the requesting group.

9. Because of the delay in the purchase of computers for translators, enabling them to work on screen, expected reductions in the workloads at the text-processing stage have not materialized to the extent anticipated. The severe constraints imposed by the cash-flow crisis of late 1996 had to be addressed by curtailing the use of temporary assistance, overtime and contractual translation services. With resources devoted on a priority basis to pre-session documents, noticeable delays occurred in the issuance of meeting records.

10. By and large, pre-session documents continued to be issued within the time-frames customary in the past. However, the need to maintain or increase productivity in translation delayed planned reductions in the rate of self-revision to focus more attention on quality, nor was it possible to implement measures aimed at improving timeliness in document issuance by resorting to overtime work in text-processing, reproduction and distribution.

11. Reduced document print runs, which were achieved by curtailing the number of copies printed for internal Secretariat distribution, for secondary requests in meeting rooms and at document stations and for stock, made possible the continued provision of essential services in reproduction and distribution, two areas affected by strict limitations in supplies, staffing levels, temporary assistance and overtime.

12. Improvements in productivity resulting from earlier investments in technology, in addition to adjustments in workflow management and priority setting, combined with a decline in the demand for services, particularly in the volume of material submitted for translation, allowed conference services to cope with the overall workload in 1996–1997, albeit at a certain cost in quality and timeliness.

13. Further managerial and technological improvements, and the expectation that the demand for meetings and documents would not return to the record levels experienced from 1992 to 1995, enabled conference services to propose, at the end of 1997, the abolition of 203 posts, almost all of which had remained vacant throughout most of the biennium in compliance with mandatory vacancy rates.

14. Of the abolished posts, 55 were in the Professional category and above. A large number were P-2 posts in language services, which were of limited use because most language staff are either recruited at the P-3 level or must be promoted to that level after an initial training period. In the General Service and Trades and Crafts categories, where 148 posts were surrendered, the abolitions reflected the continuing decrease in resource requirements for the text-processing area as a result of advances in technology, the increased electronic movement of documents and the reduced workloads in the reproduction and distribution operations. In general, established posts were relinquished where it was estimated that the mandated functions could be performed more cost-efficiently with temporary assistance or through contractual arrangements, either because of fluctuations in workload or because of the availability of qualified freelance staff whose services would cost less than the use of established posts.

15. Efficiency gains have been achieved through various organizational adjustments and technological innovations. For example, while shifts of conference services staff used to be on duty in their workplaces on weekends and holidays, teams are now placed on call, to be alerted by beeper if their presence is required to provide services on an emergency basis. Considerable savings in overtime accrue from this arrangement. Document print runs are kept under tight control, users are asked periodically to review their need for copies in the light of increasing electronic access and secondary requests for hardcopy are met through printing-on-demand from collections archived on optical disk, reducing the need for document stocks. The cost of labour and supplies is thus reduced.

16. Off-site reporting is being introduced in the production of verbatim records. Statements delivered in conference rooms are digitized, compressed and sent electronically in real time to reporters working at their home bases, who draft the records and also return them electronically. This compensates for the impact of staffing reductions in the Verbatim Reporting Service in New York. Conference services at Headquarters and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna have joined in an effort to develop remote interpretation. If the project is successful, the use of interpretation capacity could be optimized, with the services in the various duty stations supplementing each other and reducing the need for temporary staff and expenses for travel and daily subsistence allowances.

17. Notwithstanding the above, some inadequacies remain. There is insufficient excess interpretation capacity to attend to meetings of regional groups and other major groupings of Member States after all primary users have been covered. Ironically, improved planning and allocation of services by the Secretariat and better utilization of allocated resources by calendar bodies, with the resulting decrease in meeting cancellations, have contributed to this situation. Conference services can no longer compensate for late submission of documents by using overtime work and abundant staff resources for rapid turnover. Although the recent extensive delays in the issuance of summary records have largely been corrected, almost all of these have to be translated contractually, making it harder to ensure consistency and quality. Verbatim records still become backlogged during peak periods. Issuance is thus delayed and simultaneous circulation in all languages cannot be strictly implemented.

18. Conference services hopes to address these situations through further use of technology and adjustments to resource allocations.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 40
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 18 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Acting on instructions from my Government, and further to my earlier letters concerning the aggression and the practices engaged in by the Israeli forces in southern Lebanon and the occupied areas, I wish to inform you that Israel has expanded the area it occupies in southern Lebanon to include the village of Arnoun.

On 17 January 1999 in the evening, a joint force composed of Israeli soldiers and agents of the "South Lebanon Army" equipped with trucks, cranes and military vehicles surrounded Arnoun with barbed wire and set up a barrier at the entrance to the village. The inhabitants of Arnoun were informed that their village was surrounded, that it was henceforth part of the so-called "security belt" and that Arnoun Lake was now the border separating the village from the liberated areas.

This new Israeli aggression, whereby the occupied area was expanded, comes at a time when the Israeli leaders, within the context of their election campaign, are constantly talking about a withdrawal from Lebanon and an end of the occupation of the Lebanese territories in order to win votes.

The Lebanese Government wishes to inform the Secretary-General and members of the Security Council of this grave development, and urges them to act promptly to restore the status quo ante. It also draws attention to the need to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978) whereby the Council called for Israel's unconditional withdrawal to internationally recognized boundaries.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir MOUBARAK
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 40
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 18 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Second paragraph, first line

For 17 January 1999 read 17 February 1999

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General Assembly

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Fifty-third session
Agenda item 118
Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 18 February 1999 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

At present, 40 Member States are in arrears under the terms of Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states as follows:

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years. The General Assembly may, nevertheless, permit such a Member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member."

The minimum payments necessary to reduce the amounts owed by those Member States on their contributions so that they remain below the gross amount assessed for the preceding two full years (1997–1998) are the following:

	United States dollars
Afghanistan	133 000.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 274 200.00
Burundi	143 800.00
Cambodia	199 300.00
Cape Verde	93 100.00
Central African Republic	122 500.00
Congo	316 500.00
Democratic Republic of the Congo	41 000.00
Dominica	143 500.00
Ecuador	35 299.00
El Salvador	24 200.00
Equatorial Guinea	43 466.51
Gambia	143 000.00
Georgia	4 639 800.00

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Grenada	5 300.00
Guinea	133 500.00
Guinea-Bissau	273 600.00
Haiti	42 000.00
Honduras	108 600.00
Iraq	9 135 200.00
Kyrgyzstan	502 600.00
Liberia	939 100.00
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	557 900.00
Mauritania	122 300.00
Mongolia	114 222.00
Nicaragua	155 200.00
Niger	142 000.00
Republic of Moldova	1 310 900.00
Rwanda	138 808.50
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	26 900.00
Sao Tome and Principe	404 000.00
Seychelles	87 900.00
Sierra Leone	46 449.00
Somalia	805 400.00
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	90 362.53
Togo	62 500.00
Turkmenistan	494 200.00
Vanuatu	144 700.00
Yemen	123 300.00
Yugoslavia	12 678 500.00

(Signed) Kofi **Annan**
Secretary-General

United Nations A/53/835/Add.1

General Assembly

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Fifty-third session
Agenda item 118
Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 19 February 1999 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

Further to my letter dated 18 February 1999 (A/53/835), I have the honour to inform you that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

(Signed) Kofi **Annan**
Secretary-General

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19 February 1999

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda items 62 and 110
QUESTION OF CYPRUS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 19 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my previous letters, the latest dated 5 October 1998 (A/53/460-S/1998/917) I have the honour to bring to your attention the following additional documented information regarding the continuous and systematic plundering of the religious, historical and cultural identity of the Turkish-occupied part of Cyprus.

Consistently and methodically Turkey continues its unabated policy of altering the demographic character of occupied Cyprus through destruction, looting and pillaging of its copious archaeological and religious treasures, which form an integral part of the rich patrimony of the world.

More specifically,

- The new Church of the Holy Virgin Chryseleousa, Kato Kopia, has been converted into a mosque.

- The old Church of the Holy Virgin Chryseleousa, Kato Kopia, has been abandoned, looted and even stripped of its wall painted icons.

- The Church of the Archangel Michael, Rizokarpaso, has been abandoned and left to the mercy of looters.

- The Church of Saint Afxentiou, Komi Kebir, has been abandoned, looted of all its religious artifacts and stripped of all its wall painted icons.

The devastation of the cultural and religious heritage of occupied Cyprus is immense and well documented. As far back as 1982, in a series of articles in the Turkish weekly magazine Olay (26 April-12 May), Mehmet Yasin, a Turkish Cypriot journalist wrote the following: "Cyprus is being estranged from itself: the historic, environmental, communal, cultural structure is being spoiled." He continued and stated how this spoilage was taking place when he wrote "the vacant, unattended archaeological masterpieces are being pillaged".

Furthermore, in an essay entitled "Cyprus: The Loss of a Cultural Heritage" published by the University of Minnesota (Modern Greek Studies Yearbook, vol. 2, 1986), Michael Jansen, a journalist and Middle East analyst, writes: "though there has been continuing looting and export of antiquities and works of art, the major responsibility of what has taken place ... must be borne by the Turkish Cypriot side". Moreover, Michael Jansen states that the administration has been motivated to "Turkify the area [of Cyprus] under occupation. And to do this there has been an effort to remove Hellenic and Christian influences, and, in particular, vandalism of church properties".

As recently as 16 to 29 November 1998, writing in the prestigious magazine Art and Auction, Michael Jansen writes about "a great tidal wave of Cypriot art and antiquities that washed upon European shores in the 1970s and 1980s: in all, looters and smugglers carried off an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 icons, dozens of frescoes and mosaics, thousands of gold and silver candlesticks and chalices, wooden carvings and crosses and tens of thousands of items from archaeological digs". This is yet another example of the magnitude and scope of the crimes being perpetrated against the cultural patrimony of occupied Cyprus.

Even though these documented acts of wanton and systematic destruction are an affront to civilization and are in violation of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Cooperation adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, they still continue to this day.

Turkey, as the occupying power responsible, should be made accountable and fully answerable for these illegal acts of destruction. The international community should stop tolerating this unacceptable situation of religious intolerance.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter conveyed to all human rights mechanisms and circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 62 and 110, and of the Security Council.

Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/53/837

General Assembly

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19 February 1999
English
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Fifty-third session
Agenda items 112 and 113

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programme budget for the biennium 1998–1999

Letter dated 17 February 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 29 December 1998, the newspaper *The Washington Times* published an article on the negotiations on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 which included statements by members of the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations. These statements should be carefully studied, given the influence of public opinion in the United States on the Government's decisions and on the conditions which Congress constantly places on its compliance with the country's financial obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

These statements, particularly the statement by Mr. Richard Sklar, also merit a response because they are full of mistakes and inaccuracies, and reflect a total ignorance of the negotiations in which only representatives of regional groups and certain countries, which on that occasion did not include Cuba, participated.

Despite the political epithets directed at my Government by this official, I would prefer to focus, in view of their importance, on administrative and budgetary matters.

We wonder which is the truly reactionary and irrational State, the one that, inspired by the principles and purposes set out in the Charter and endorsed in successive General Assembly resolutions, participates in the negotiations in order to ensure that the Organization receives the resources it needs for its orderly and rational functioning and the full implementation of mandated activities, or the one that tries to push its internal policy decisions, misuse procedures and violate General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 41/213, in order to impose specific budgetary caps and zero-growth policies.

Such policies have led to the adoption of resolutions like 50/214, whose negative impact on the execution of United Nations activities and on the morale of its principal resource, the staff, are well known.

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What can one call a State that, although the major contributor, makes arbitrary budget cuts when the conditions imposed by its Congress are not met?

Fortunately, most Member States meet their financial obligations responsibly and recognize that decisions of their parliaments can only be implemented internally; otherwise you, Sir, would be faced with total chaos while trying to implement the decisions of 185 legislative bodies.

Mr. Sklar's accusation that countries "who don't pay" (a reference that included Cuba) dominated the negotiating exercise is erroneous. My Government's pattern of payments clearly reflects its unshakable determination to meet its budgetary obligations despite the extraordinary difficulties it is facing as a result of the rigid, irrational and inhuman economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America on Cuba for more than three long decades.

If the topic is non-payment, the example that should be cited is in fact the United States of America, which at the end of 1998 owed the Organization 1,294,163,678 United States dollars, or 63.72 per cent of all arrears.

The aforementioned article states that a United Nations official had promised the United States representative on the Fifth Committee that he would reduce the budget by another several million dollars to ensure zero growth. My Government would prefer not to believe such reports but to reiterate its position that the actions of the Secretariat must be entirely guided by the decisions of the General Assembly.

We hope that the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 coincides with the figure approved in the budget outline. Proposing lower amounts would give an extremely negative signal to Member States in particular and to the international community in general, and would cast doubt on the principle of the impartiality of the Secretariat as well as on the different functions and prerogatives of the two principal bodies.

Allow me to reiterate that my Government will continue to participate constructively in the negotiations on the budget and the intergovernmental debate on those proposals of your reform programme that call for a decision by the General Assembly.

Lastly, I should like to request you to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 112 and 113.

In conveying to you once again my Government's ongoing commitment to the United Nations and our support for your efforts to reform the Organization so that it becomes more efficient and stronger, I would ask you also to accept the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Rafael **Dausá Céspedes**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.